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GRNA Volunteers,

Wow, where did the summer go!? It's sure been a busy one, filled with stewardship working bees, parcel monitoring, summer camp, and lots of public programming. Plus, I'd like to give a special shout out to all of our amazing volunteers who helped plan and put on a very successful Riverfest event last week!

As we start the transition to autumn, there are still lots of projects to help with. Check out the upcoming volunteer opportunities below, and if you don't see something for you, don't hesitate to reach out.

Here's to cooler temps ahead!

Emily Burke
Conservation & Education Specialist
emily@grassriver.org

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FALL STREAM MONITORING

Sat, Sept 25 from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

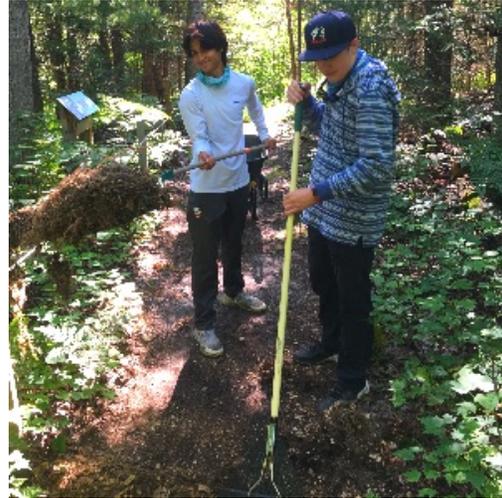
New and seasoned volunteers of all ages are invited to join us as we collect data for our biannual stream monitoring program. This year, teams will be collecting macroinvertebrates (creek "bugs") at three sites along Shanty Creek and then will return to the Grass River Center to sort through their critter samples. Pre-registration is required - email Emily at emily@grassriver.org. Note: new volunteers will be put into groups with



more experienced volunteers. Dress for the weather, and bring hip waders if you have them (though we have more than enough pairs to loan out!)

FALL STEWARDSHIP DAY

**Sat, Oct
2 from
9:00 am
- 12:00
pm
Summer**



is ushering in autumn, which means cooler weather and some good ol' fall season work! Come on out and join the many stewardship activities as we prepared the buildings, trails, and grounds for winter. No experience is necessary; just a pair of work gloves and an open spirit. Pre-registration is encouraged - email Brian at stewardship@grassriver.org.



AUTUMNFEST HELP

Sat, Oct 16 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and during the weeks leading up to the event

Autumnfest is GRNA's annual family-friendly celebration of all things fall. There will be kids' activities in the Center and out on the trails, refreshments, and a likely appearance by the Grass River otter itself! Plus, this year we will also be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the building of the Grass River Center. Volunteer opportunities associated with this great event include joining our Events Committee to

help plan Autumnfest, as well as lending a hand on the day of for set-up and clean-up. Email Emily at emily@grassriver.org if you're interested in helping out.

FRONT DESK DOCENT

Ongoing

GRNA is in need of a few volunteer docents to help us cover the front desk of the Grass River Center. This position involves opening and closing the Center, greeting visitors and answering questions, performing simple point of sale transactions from our gift shop, and light housekeeping duties to keep the Center looking tidy. If you have excellent customer service skills, are knowledgeable about Grass River or are willing to learn, and want to give back to GRNA in a meaningful way, contact James at james@grassriver.org. Training will be provided. The Center is open 10:00 am to 4:00 pm seven days a week through the end of October and on Saturdays and Sundays November through April.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: BOB & SHERIDAN HAACK

For this month's volunteer spotlight, we're featuring the Haacks, who have been volunteering at GRNA since 2015, when they joined the Land Management Committee. Since then, they've both been instrumental in updating our Natural Resources Management Plan and in our parcel monitoring project. Bob and Bill Ruesink, another entomologist, conducted a research study of beetles at GRNA (and Bob has recently been collecting data on caddisflies within the natural area), while Sheridan has conducted intermittent monitoring for bumble bees at GRNA. We caught up with the Haacks to hear about their experiences at GRNA over the years:

What inspires you to volunteer for GRNA?

We both worked as environmentally-oriented scientists for our careers, so we enjoy being outdoors. Volunteering at GRNA allows us opportunities to be involved in a variety of outdoor activities and to be associated with many similarly-minded people.

What's the neatest thing you've learned since you started volunteering with GRNA?

Bob: As a forest entomologist, I worked mostly on solid ground, but at GRNA, I have been out in many of the wetland habitats that have lots of unique plants and animals.

Sheridan: I've been particularly excited to delve deeper into learning about Michigan's natural communities through working on the updated Natural Resources Management Plan and then exploring those communities on foot during parcel monitoring. And I discovered a relatively rare bumble bee at GRNA!



What do you wish other people knew about GRNA?

In general, we wish the public knew more about the large network of trails that exist at



GRNA and that it is freely open to all. We also wish researchers knew more about the unique and diverse habitats at GRNA and that GRNA would welcome and support many types of field biology studies. (Editor's note: Drawing researchers to GRNA is a project the Haacks are actively working on with the Land Management Committee, so stay tuned for updates).

When you aren't volunteering, what do you spend time doing?

We both enjoy biking and kayaking, and Bob enjoys tending to his 2-acre chestnut orchard. Sheridan likes gardening - especially planting native flowers to attract bumble bees!

Any fun facts about you that you want to tell us about?

Well, way back in the 1970s, we were both Peace Corps volunteers: Bob in Guatemala, working as a forester, and Sheridan in Malawi in central Africa, working as a teacher!



GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE!!



THE RIVERFEST 2021 ONLINE AUCTION ENDS TOMORROW AT 9 PM. IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO BID!!

Items of special interest include a fully-paid-for week of camp for kids in GRNA's summer, spring, or winter camp series (including early registration for a guaranteed spot), plus several beautifully crafted local pieces of art and exciting travel and experiential packages. Check it out!

Bid now to support GRNA

SAVE THE DATE

for GRNA's Volunteer Appreciation Event, honoring YOU!

Wed, Oct 6th from 5:00 - 7:00 pm
Location TBD

Join us for good food, nature
improv, and celebration!

Invitation to follow



Grass River Natural Area is a nonprofit organization that has flourished for fifty-one years because of the generous support of people who value our mission "to manage the Grass River Natural Area, conserve and protect its watershed, and provide opportunities that increase knowledge, appreciation and community-wide stewardship of the natural environment".

If you believe in our mission and want to help us fulfill it for many years to come, please click on the Donate button below. Your support is greatly appreciated.

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